(d) what is India's stand on sanctions being imposed on Iran?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The US Government have, as a member of the UN Security Council,' stated their expectation that all UN member States including Iran, will act under their Charter obligations to implement the UN Security Council Resolutions aimed at persuading Iran to suspend nuclear related activities that violate Iran's Treaty obligations and international commitments. In this context, US Government have approached UN Member States, including India, to support the broader international community's effort to isolate Iran with the aim of inducing Iran to desist from developing nuclear weapons and destabilising the region.

(b) As a UN member State, India is implementing her obligations under the recent United Nations Security Council Resolutions No. 1737 and No. 1747 on Iran. India's consistent stand has been that all possible effort should be made to address the issue of Iran's nuclear programme by peaceful means through dialogue and negotiations and that the IAEA should play a central role in resolving outstanding issues. Our position is that coercion and application of force is not the answer to resolve issues.

(c) The West Asian region, including Iran, has traditionally been an important region for focus in India's foreign policy and continues to remain so. There is no shift in that approach. The sole guiding principle in regard to our policy, whether it is on Iran or any other country, is dictated by India's national interests. India's relations with any country are independent of its relations with a third country.

(d) India's position is that the passage of UNSC resolutions 1737 and 1747 underscore the need for more active and transparent cooperation of Iran with the IAEA for resolution of outstanding issues. We would like to see that all sides approach the issue with flexibility and restraint.

Companies restricted by America

†1893. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of India have taken/propose to take any steps to defend the Indian Companies restricted by America on the ground of violation of International Exports laws; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes. Export control laws are nationally promulgated and implemented. The United States (US) has national laws under which it has imposed restrictions on foreign companies. The imposition of restrictions by the US on Indian companies, which in Government's assessment have not acted in violation of India's laws and regulations, is not justified. The matter has been taken up by Government with the US Government whenever such restrictions have been imposed.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.